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A VERSATILE ARTIST.

BY ALEXANDER BLACK.

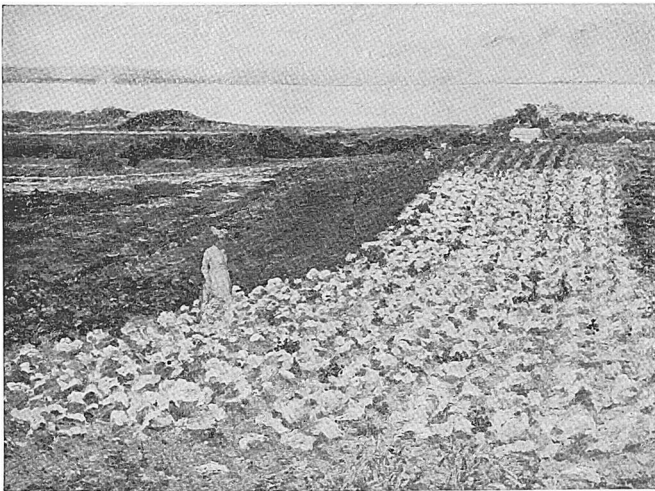
(With original illustrations by Carle J. Blenner.)

CARLE J. BLENNER belongs to that interesting group of American artists which we sometimes vaguely describe as "the younger men," or as vaguely again as "the rising men." A Virginian by birth, an alumnus of Yale, he has, within the space of a very few years, exhibited a capacity to be cosmopolitan in style to a degree such as only Americans, perhaps, ever can. He received his art education—or perhaps, in the case of a student so indefatigable, we should say the academic part of this education—at Paris, under Bouguereau, Schenck, and other masters, from whom he returned with a firmly individual style.



"AN OLD-FASHIONED GARDEN, CONNECTICUT."

His work displays a great deal of versatility, ranging from the most delicate forms of landscape to spirited portraiture. At the World's Fair he exhibits "Contentment," and a portrait of Señor Don Roderigo de Saavedra of the Spanish Legation, both admirable examples of his style. That Mr. Blenner will always be effective in portraiture is hinted in the force and character of his figure studies, which contain subtle draughtsmanship and wholesome phases of color. The head of an old woman reproduced in one of the illustrations to the present article is a piece of clever realism in which there is a keen reading of the human nature lying



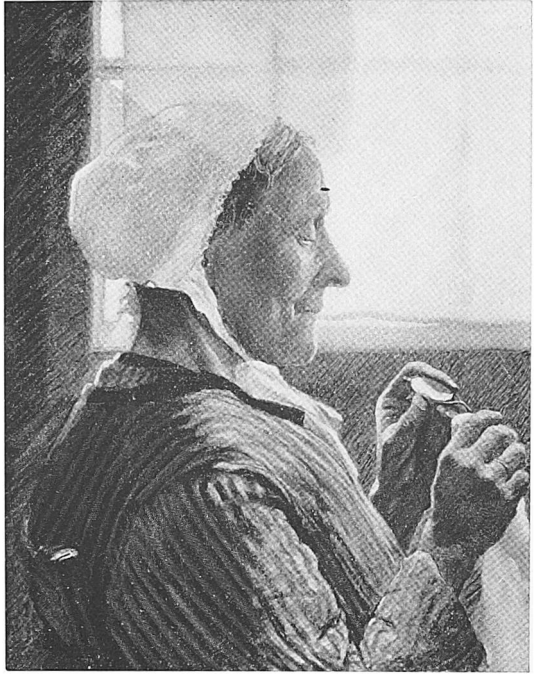
"IN THE CABBAGE FIELD."

beneath the surface. "Country Life" tells the simple yet always freshly eloquent story of the farm and its unexciting routine. The elements of the picture are skillfully brought together, and the work throughout is sincere and direct. How neatly Mr. Blenner manages sentiment may be indicated by "Afternoon Tea," which belongs to the *vers de société* of painting, and which makes no attempt to

give to the old romance anything more than its natural charm. This is one of the stories that always are told best when they are told without flourishes—though, after all, it might be difficult to fancy a subject of which this could not be said.

During his residence in Paris, Mr. Blenner appears to have become acquainted with many phases of French life and character. Certainly his studies of Parisian scenes and people are marked by a quite evident appreciation of something more than the shell of things. The "Luxembourg Garden," for example, strikes a truly Parisian note, and the same may be said of the glimpse into the grounds of the Musée de Cluny. Mr. Blenner enters with zest into the treatment of subjects nearer home. He has put real poetry in his "Old-Fashioned Garden," one of those

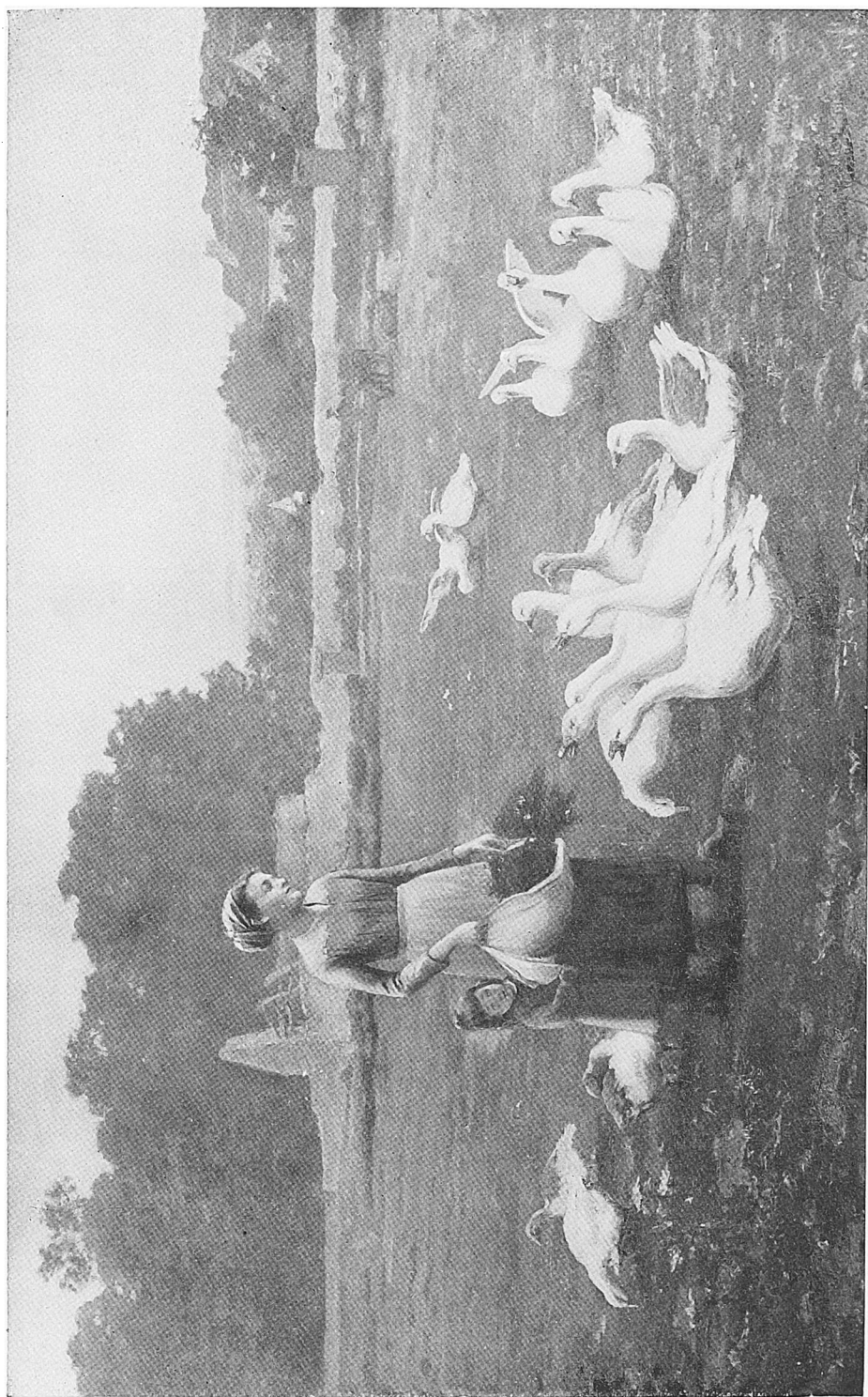
quaint, inartistic but delightful nooks of Connecticut, where there are stone walls



"A STUDY OF AGE."

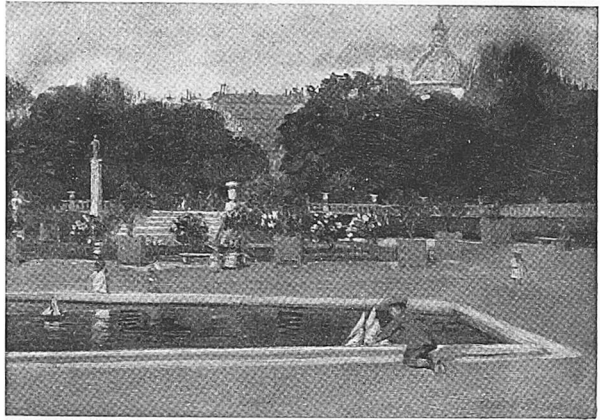


"GARDEN OF THE MUSÉE CLUNY, PARIS."



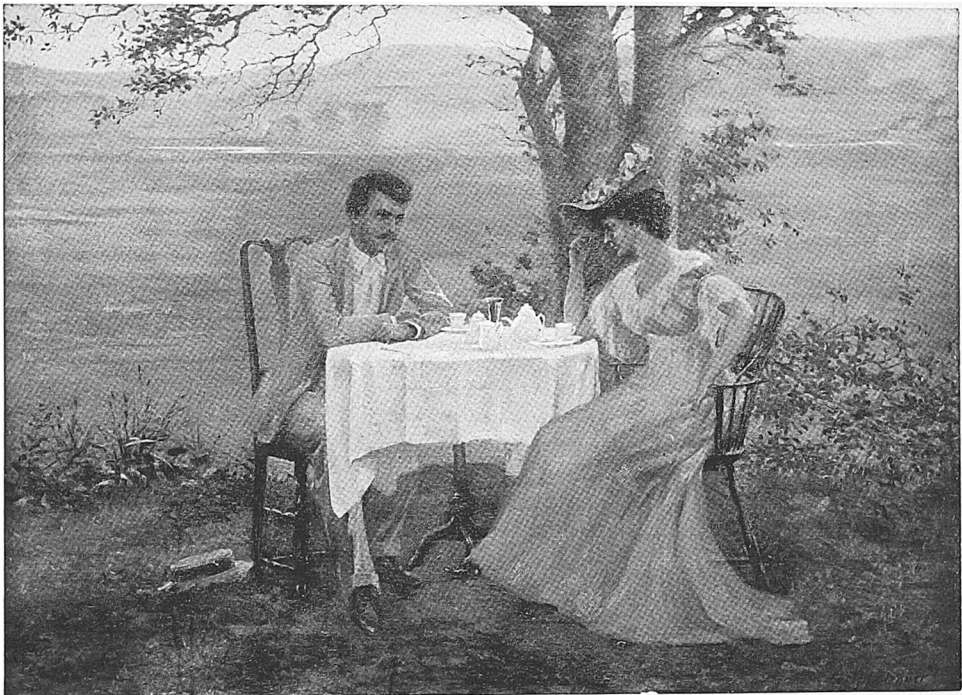
"COUNTRY LIFE."

for vines to grow on, and nature has a strongly distinctive cast. These nooks are so often neglected that it becomes a real pleasure to find them well treated by a discerning artist. "In the Cabbage Field" carries the eye across a stretch of cultivated country. These subjects are not fantastic; they do not bid for that dangerous adjective "ingenious." They deal with the fundamentals, and deal with them without sensationalism of any kind.



"LUXEMBOURG GARDEN, PARIS."

As an illustrator, Mr. Blenner has shown highly favoring gifts. The facility with which he eliminates unnecessary detail gives pertinence and clearness to his work. Illustrators are perhaps particularly under the necessity for studying the element of proportion in the use of detail. Too many of our ambitious illustrators are missing the essentials of the art by overloading their pictures. Mr. Blenner appears to be in no danger of hampering himself by making this radical error. During the past summer he had charge of the Yale art school, and is now settled again in his New York studio in the Sherwood, where the winter days will be too brief to work up the thousand and one sketches treasured in his well-worn note-book. In his wide range of subjects, Mr. Blenner will easily avoid sameness of execution.



"AFTERNOON TEA."